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Marine Fisheries Advisory

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PRESS CONTACT, TINA BERGER 202/289-6400

**States Schedule Hearings on Draft Addenda II & III to the Interstate FMP for Spiny
Dogfish
*Public Comment Accepted Until October 16, 2008***

Atlantic coastal states have scheduled their hearings to gather public comment on Draft Addenda II & III to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Spiny Dogfish. The dates, times, and locations of the scheduled meetings follow:

Maine Department of Marine Resources

October 2, 2008; 6:00 PM
Casco Bay Lines
56 Commercial Street
Portland, Maine
Contact: Terry Stockwell at (207) 624-6553

New Hampshire Fish and Game

October 15, 2008; 7:00 PM
Urban Forestry Center
45 Elwyn Road
Portsmouth, New Hampshire
Contact: Doug Grout at (603) 868-1095

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries

September 25, 2008; 6:00 PM
Radisson - Plymouth Harbor
180 Water Street

Plymouth, Massachusetts
Contact: Melanie Griffin at (617) 626-1528

** Interested RI fishermen are encouraged to attend this meeting to submit their comments*

Connecticut Dept. of Environmental Protection

September 24, 2008; 7:00 PM
DEP Marine Fisheries Office
333 Ferry Road
Old Lyme, Connecticut
Contact: Dave Simpson at (860) 434-6043

New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation

September 30, 2008; 6:00 PM
Bureau of Marine Resources Headquarters
205 North Belle Mead Road
East Setauket, New York
Contact: Steve Heins at (630) 444-0436

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife

October 7, 2008; 7:00 PM
Division of Fish & Wildlife
Marine Enforcement Office
Route 9, Mile Post 51
Port Republic, New Jersey
Contact: Tom McCloy at (609) 292-7794

Delaware Dept. of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

October 6, 2008; 7:00 PM
Richardson and Robbins Building Auditorium
89 Kings Highway
Dover, Delaware
Contact: Roy Miller at (302) 739-9914

Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources

October 8, 2008; 6:00 PM
Ocean City Municipal Airport
12724 Airport Road
Berlin, Maryland
Contact: Angel Bolinger at (410) 213-1531

Virginia Marine Resources Commission

September 17, 2008; 6:00 PM
2600 Washington Ave, 4th floor
Newport News, Virginia
Contact: Jack Travelstead (757) 247-2247

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries

September 23, 2008; 7:00 PM
Roanoke Island Festival Park
One Festival Park
Manteo, North Carolina
Contact: Red Munden (252) 726-7021

September 24, 2008; 7:00 PM
Clamdigger Inn
511 Salter Path Road
Pine Knoll Shore, North Carolina
Contact: Red Munden (252) 726-7021

Both addenda propose management options that reflect the historic regional distribution of the spiny dogfish landings among the states. The Board's action responds to the concern of some states that the current seasonal allocation program is not providing their commercial fishermen the opportunity to harvest the available quota as was intended by the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Spiny Dogfish.

Currently, the interstate spiny dogfish management program allocates the annual commercial quota seasonally while Board action distributes the quota regionally within the seasonal allocation. The seasonal allocation system divides the quota into two periods, with 57.9 percent of the quota available for harvest from May 1 to October 31 and 42.1 percent available for harvest from November 1 to April 30. Through Board action, states agreed upon a regional allocation system dividing the quota between two regions, with 58 percent allocated to the northern states (ME - CT) and 42 percent allocated to the southern states (NY-NC). The 58/42 percent allocation was designed to preserve the historical distribution of landings. In recent years, however, the seasonal allocation strategy, which is influenced by dogfish migratory patterns, has resulted in overages of the northern quota share and reduced access to the resource by the southern states.

Draft Addendum II proposes to eliminate the current seasonal allocation system and to formalize the regional allocation system. To ensure a fair allocation of the annual quota between regions and maintain the conservation goals of the plan, the Draft Addendum proposes that each region be accountable for its overharvest through quota reductions the following year. Under the current system, overages in one region have resulted in a reduced quota to the other region. The Board may choose to implement this Addendum for the 2008/2009 fishing season. If approved and implemented for the 2008/2009 fishing season, quota will be assigned retroactively accounting for landings from earlier in the fishing season.

Draft Addendum III proposes a suite of options for the establishment of a state-by-state allocation system including quota transfer between states. Options include a minimum threshold (fixed percentage of the annual quota to be distributed to all states independent of historical landings) and percent allocations based on a variety of base years. Addendum III also includes an option for state payback of overages.

Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the Draft Addenda, either through attending public hearings or providing written comments. Copies can be obtained by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400 or via the Commission's website at www.asmfc.org under Breaking News. Public comment will be accepted until **5:00 PM on October 16, 2008** and should be forwarded to Christopher Vonderweidt, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, 1444 'Eye' Street, NW, Sixth Floor, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 289-6051 (FAX) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Spiny Dogfish). For more information, please contact Christopher Vonderweidt at (202) 289-6400.

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